



Making Meetings Work: Approaches and Tools

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Welcome to Elements of Meaningful Participation



- ❑ Two half-days
 - Today basic principles
 - Tomorrow look at some tools and techniques
- ❑ Two 15 minute breaks each day
- ❑ Dialogue and small groups

2

Using Zoom




- ❑ App works best
- ❑ Please keep your camera on during plenary and small group discussions
- ❑ Keep mics muted when not talking
- ❑ Does anyone need help with zoom?


3

Introductions

- What are your frustrations and challenges with public meetings?
- What do you hope to discover today?








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Making Meetings Work: Approaches and Tools



The Problem with Meetings

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If you had to identify, in one word, the reason why the human race has not achieved, and never will achieve, its full potential, that word would be “meetings”

—Dave Barry

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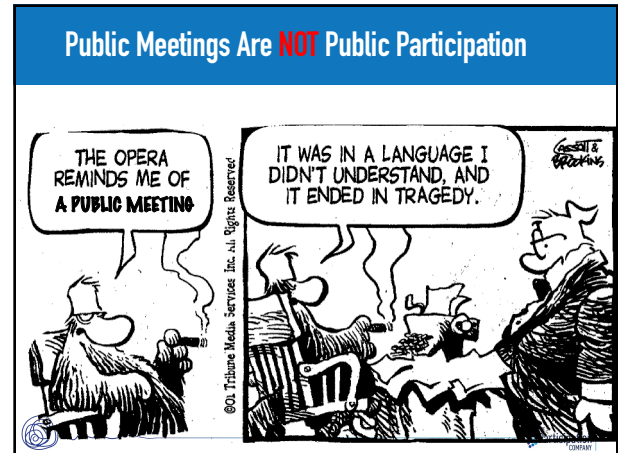
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DIALOGUE

YOUR PUBLIC MEETING EXPERIENCE

- Think about good and bad public meetings that you have attended
- What happened in each?
- What made the difference?

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Why Public Meetings Fail

- Everybody has already taken positions

12

Why Public Meetings Fail

1. (Almost) Everybody has already taken positions



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Why Public Meetings Fail

1. (Almost) Everybody has already taken positions (including you)



14

Why Public Meetings Fail

1. (Almost) Everybody has already taken positions (including you)
2. Everybody Hates Public Speaking



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Why Public Meetings Fail

1. (Almost) Everybody has already taken positions (including you)
2. Everybody Hates Public Speaking (Well, lots of people anyway)



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What People Fear

People Fear Public Speaking More than...

- ☐ Murder by a stranger
- ☐ Snakes
- ☐ Volcanoes
- ☐ Zombies

But Less than...

- ☐ Corrupt government officials
- ☐ Pollution
- ☐ Terrorists



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Why Public Meetings Fail

1. (Almost) Everybody has already taken positions (including you)
2. Everybody Hates Public Speaking (Well, lots of people anyway)
3. Nobody's Listening



18

Why Public Meetings Fail

1. (Almost) Everybody has already taken positions (including you)
2. Everybody Hates Public Speaking (Well, lots of people anyway)
3. Nobody's Listening (Really, everybody has already taken positions)



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Why Public Meetings Fail

1. (Almost) Everybody has already taken positions (including you)
2. Everybody Hates Public Speaking (Well, lots of people anyway)
3. Nobody's Listening (Really, everybody has already taken positions)
4. Everybody is Angry



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Why Public Meetings Fail

1. (Almost) Everybody has already taken positions (including you)
2. Everybody Hates Public Speaking (Well, lots of people anyway)
3. Nobody's Listening (Really, everybody has already taken positions)
4. Everybody is Angry (or at least pretty annoyed)



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*You need
to get at
the root of
why
people are
angry or it
will never
stop*

Anger Iceberg

Icebergs are large pieces of ice found floating in the open ocean. What you can see from the surface can be misleading. Most of the iceberg is hidden below the water.

This is how anger works. Often when we are angry, there are other emotions hidden under the surface.

Angry

embarrassed, tricked, scared, overwhelmed, grief, shame, frustrated, depressed, disrespected, distrustful, attacked, grumpy, stressed, guilt, trapped, rejected, helpless, trauma, annoyed, nervous, anxious, disrespected, exhausted, envious, disappointed, lonely, offended, uncomfortable, regret, worried, insecure, hurt

The Gottman Institute



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Why Public Meetings Fail

1. (Almost) Everybody has already taken positions (including you)
2. Everybody Hates Public Speaking (Well, lots of people anyway)
3. Nobody's Listening (Really, everybody has already taken positions)
4. Everybody is Angry (or at least pretty annoyed)
5. Most of the People You Need to Reach Aren't Even There



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Why Public Meetings Fail

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5. Most of the People You Need to Reach Aren't Even There
6. Nobody Trusts You



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Why Public Meetings Fail

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5. Most of the People You Need to Reach Aren't Even There
6. Nobody Trusts You (or each other)

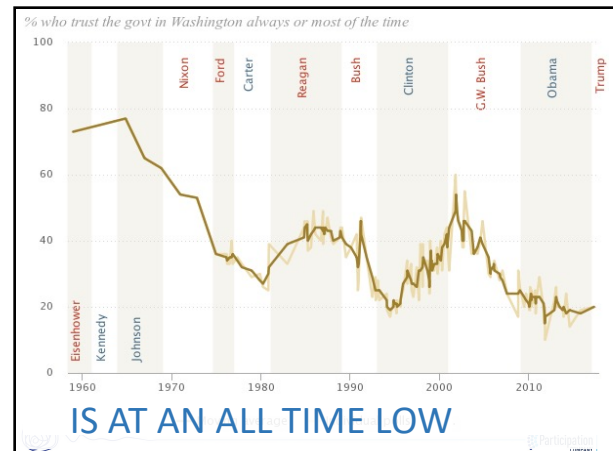


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TRUST IN GOVERNMENT...

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*Trust in institutions and their license to operate is no longer automatically granted on the basis of hierarchy or title; rather, in today's world, **trust must be earned.***

-- Richard Edelman



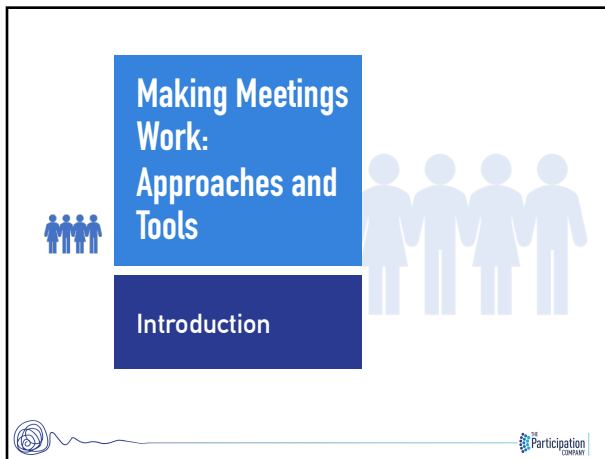
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It's More Than Just A Bad Meeting

- Lost trust
- Misunderstanding
- Damaged relationships
- Lost credibility
- Lost goodwill



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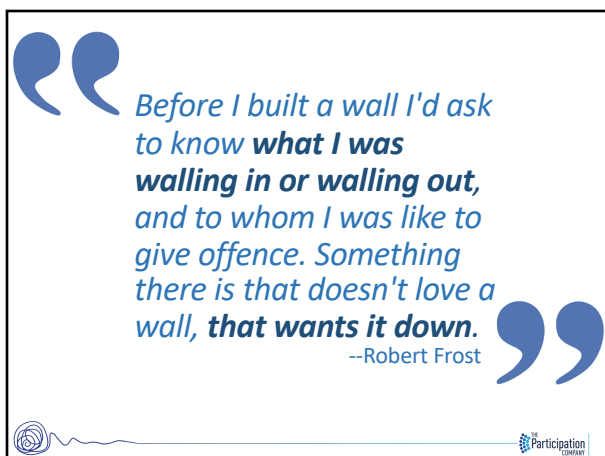
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PUBLIC MEETINGS CAN BE YOUR MOST IMPORTANT BRIDGES TO STAKEHOLDERS

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*Tell me, I forget.
Show me, I remember.
Involve me, I understand.*

--Chinese Proverb

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We want to move from this..



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To This...



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The 5 P's For Effective Meetings

1. Purpose

Why are we holding this meeting and what is the desired outcome?

2. People

Who needs to be present and what do they need to participate effectively?

3. Place

Where will the meeting be held, what environment needs to be created?

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2

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The 5 P's

4. Presentations

What information will be needed and how will it be presented?

5. Process

How will we conduct the meeting? What techniques will we use?



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1. Purpose



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Every Meeting Needs A Clear Purpose

Especially the ones we hold all the time.



"Frankly, I don't know why I called this meeting."



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The majority of meetings should be discussions that lead to decisions.

--Patrick Lencioni



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High Value-Added Reasons to Meet

DECISIONS	We bring people together to find common ground and make choices and decisions.
DIALOGUE	We directly engage stakeholders with each other, hear their issues and concerns, and share our own as well.
DIVERSITY	Stakeholders talk to each other and hear people who have ideas and concerns that are different from theirs.
RELATIONSHIPS	Space is created for relationship building
SHARED LEARNING	Information is discussed in a way that heightens everyone's understanding, and creates shared meaning and understanding of the most important issues



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Identify A Clear Purpose

- ☐ Why are we holding this meeting?
- ☐ What do we hope to achieve?
- ☐ What is the role of the public?
- ☐ Relate it directly to your stakeholders.
- ☐ Give them a clear reason to attend.



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Identify Desired Outcomes

- ❑ What do you hope to get out of this meeting?
- ❑ How will it be used in the decision-making process?



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Communicate Your Purpose

- ❑ Establish realistic expectations
- ❑ Identifies reasons for people to attend
- ❑ Helps prepare people to participate effectively



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Create Context for Participants

- ❑ Where are we in the process?
- ❑ What's most important?
- ❑ Why should you care?
- ❑ What do we all need to know?



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15 Minute Break



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DIALOGUE

WHY DO WE HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS?

- » Why are public meetings used as often as they are?
- » What purposes are we most trying to achieve?
- » Do we focus on the value added?



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EXERCISE

ADDING VALUE TO OUR MEETINGS

- » Consider the table on page 3
- » Select a goal where we do not traditionally use meetings
- » Identify how a meeting might be used for this purpose for a current project






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2. People



55



WE NEED TO INCLUDE THE FULL RANGE OF STAKEHOLDER VOICES

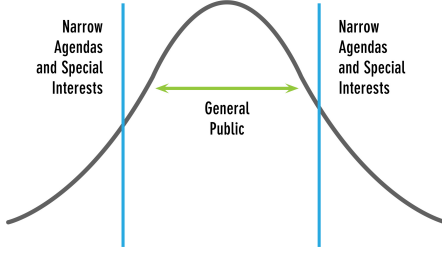


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Consider Impacts of Implicit Bias

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"The Public" Does Not Exist

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Get The Right People In The Room



- ❑ Identify the voices who "should" be in the room
- ❑ Invite stakeholders personally and explain how they can help
- ❑ Explain clearly to stakeholders why it is in their interest to attend

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Get The Right People In The Room

- ❑ Make your meeting meaningful to your stakeholders
- ❑ Engage stakeholders directly in the design and implementation of the meeting
- ❑ Create local partnerships to co-host meetings and assist in convening.

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Assess and Repair Relationships

- ❑ The potential for a successful meeting is directly related to the status of your relationships with the community
- ❑ If relationship repair is needed, it should be done prior to bringing people together
- ❑ Repairing relationships takes time
- ❑ Look to third party assistance



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DIALOGUE

GETTING THE WHOLE COMMUNITY "IN THE ROOM"

- ❖ What happens when we are not hearing from the whole community at our meetings?
- ❖ What can we do about it?



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3. Place



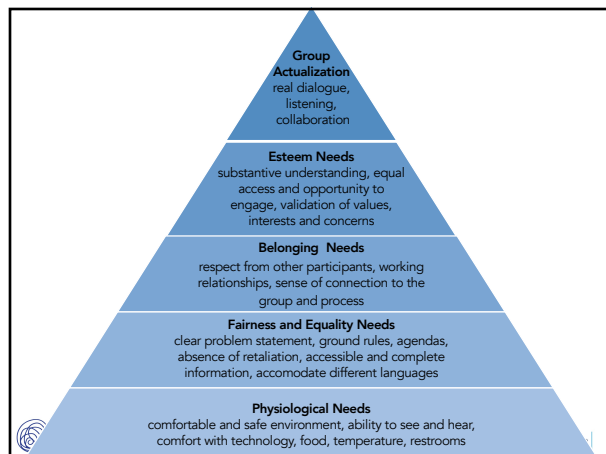
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Elements of Placemaking

- ❑ Meeting location
- ❑ Physical space
- ❑ Meeting environment
- ❑ How your stakeholders feel

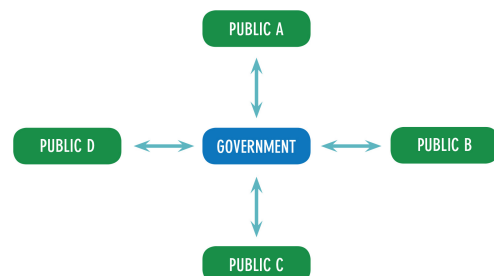


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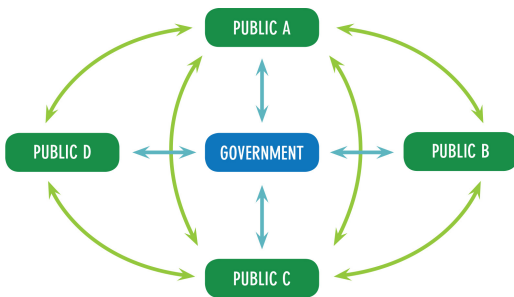
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Move Relationships From This...



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To This...



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Behaviors For Successful Meetings

- ❑ Respect the role of the public in this process
- ❑ Demonstrate the belief in the value of public participation
- ❑ Show interest in stakeholders
- ❑ Have patience
- ❑ Be humble
- ❑ Be transparent

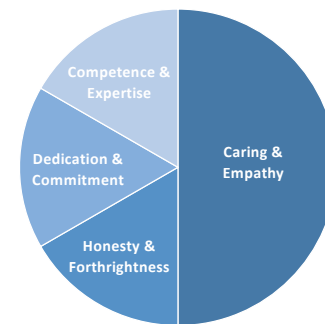
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Behaviors For Successful Meetings

- ❑ Demonstrate a high level of personal integrity
- ❑ Be open and friendly
- ❑ Listen fully
- ❑ Demonstrate energy and a sense of humor
- ❑ Demonstrate empathy toward others.

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Factors That Inspire Trust and Credibility



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Help Participants Be Ready To Engage

- ❑ A clear understanding of the issue and challenge being addressed
- ❑ A clear understanding of their role in the process
- ❑ A clear understanding of how other stakeholders are involved and the range of values and interests that EPA must consider

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Help Participants Be Ready To Engage

- ❑ A clear understanding of the meeting purpose, needs, constraints
- ❑ A clear understanding of the decision-making process and how this meeting fits into it
- ❑ Trusted and understandable baseline information that provides them the context and knowledge to provide meaningful input

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15 Minute Break



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DIALOGUE

CREATING SENSE OF PLACE

- Consider the graphic on page 7/8
- Where are we failing to meet the needs of our stakeholders at public meetings?

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EXERCISE

CREATING SENSE OF PLACE

- What can we do about it?
- Each group identify 3 concrete and implementable ideas?

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4. Presentations



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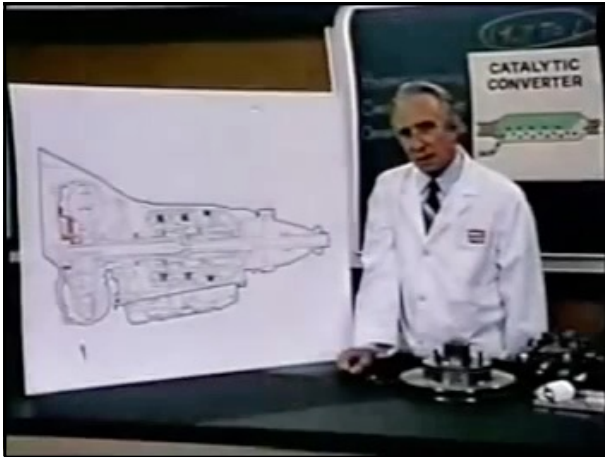
Planning for Effective Presentations

- Determine What Stakeholders Need to Know
- Start Where they Are
- Relate it to Their Lives
- Consider the Human Learning Curve
- Make it Interesting
- Choose Effective Presenters and Prepare
- Leave a Legacy

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***DON'T LET YOUR PUBLIC
HEAR THIS...***

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DIALOGUE

PRESENTATIONS?

- Where do we struggle in proving effective and accessible information at meetings?
- What does it look like when we do this well?

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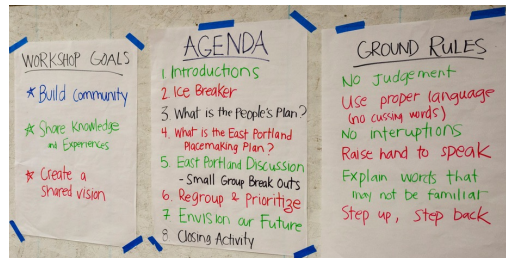
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5. Process

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Everyone Needs to Understand Everything





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Consider Impacts of Implicit Bias



85

Create Agenda That Addresses Participant Needs

- ❑ Identify all desired outcomes
- ❑ Identify how participants will engage
- ❑ Allow time for people to vent
- ❑ Be clear about what you are doing **and why**



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Create Agenda That Addresses Participant Needs

- ❑ Be flexible and ready to adjust to reality
- ❑ Design for the human learning curve
- ❑ Avoid arbitrary timeframes
- ❑ Make time for dialogue



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Plan for All Key Meeting Components

- ❑ Clarify purpose and outcomes
- ❑ Set groundrules
- ❑ Identify who is in the room
- ❑ Acknowledge the emotion



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Plan for All Key Meeting Components

- ❑ Establish the baseline set of facts
- ❑ Dialogue for ALL participants
- ❑ Acknowledge agreement and disagreement
- ❑ Close with clarity

**YES WE ARE
ON THE SAME
PAGE BUT
YOU ARE NOT
READING THE
SAME BOOK.**



89

Active Facilitation

- ❑ Manage the conversation
- ❑ Help everyone be heard
- ❑ Acknowledge the emotion
- ❑ Keep track of progress
- ❑ Identify agreement
- ❑ Provide closure and connection



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Establish Groundrules

- Relevant to the meeting
- Get shared agreement up front
- Short and direct
- Limit to 4 or 5
- Visible to all throughout the meeting

ground rules



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Groundrule Behaviors

- Civility
- Respect
- Listening
- Cooperation
- Agreement



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Enforce Groundrules

- Propose draft groundrules
- Take suggestions, get agreement
- Remind folks of our agreement to correct behavior



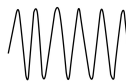
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Put Dialogue at the Heart of Your Meeting



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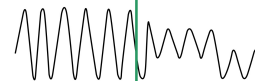
Dialogue



Debate/Argument
Objective is to **Win**
It's all about me
You are my opponent
Rudeness OK

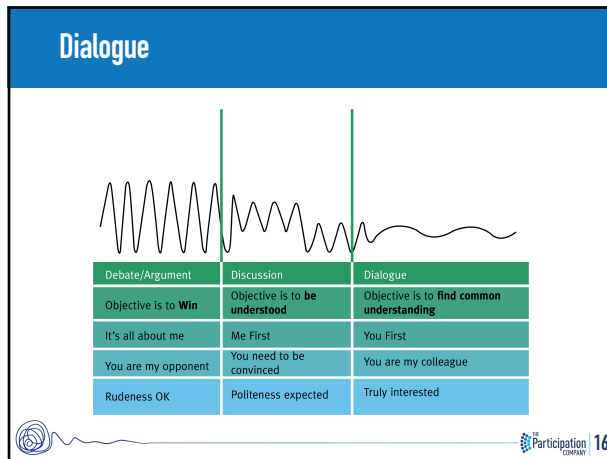
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Dialogue

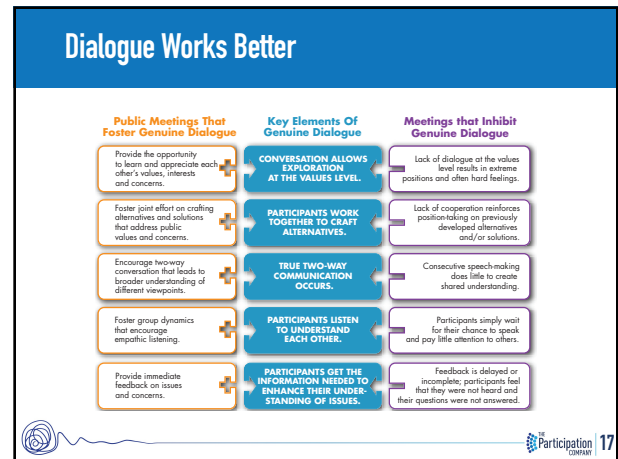


Debate/Argument	Discussion
Objective is to Win	Objective is to be understood
It's all about me	Me First
You are my opponent	You need to be convinced
Rudeness OK	Politeness expected

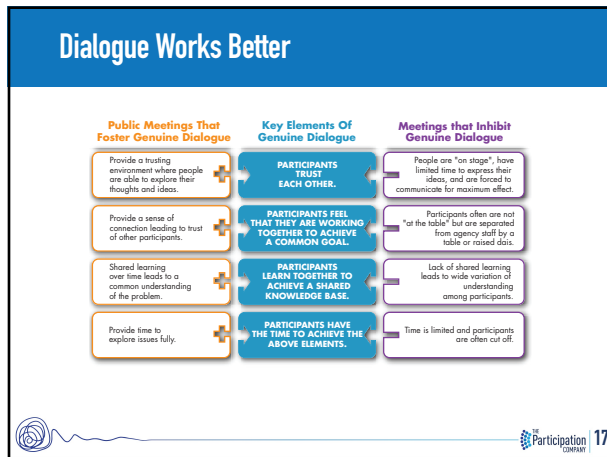
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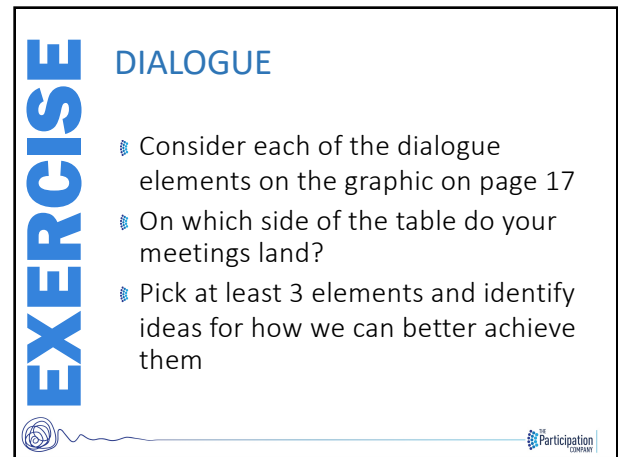
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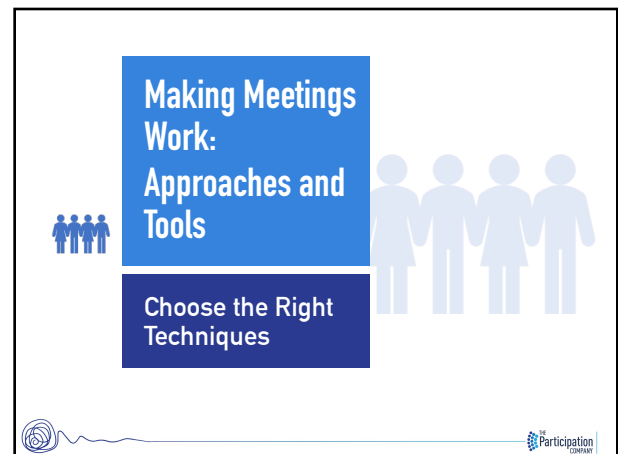
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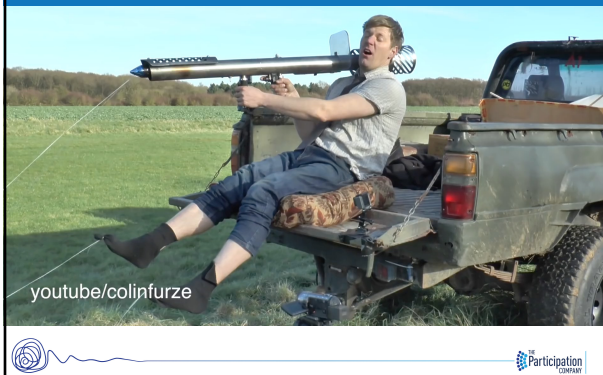


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Match Technique to Your Objective



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Four Meeting Techniques and Three tools

- ☐ World Café
- ☐ Open Space
- ☐ Samoan Circle
- ☐ Study Circles
- ☐ Focused Conversation
- ☐ Card Storming
- ☐ Nominal Group Technique

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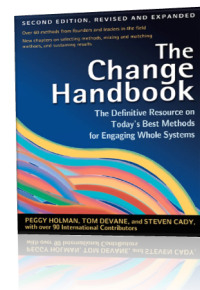
Techniques and Tools

- ☐ Goal is to introduce a variety of ways of holding meetings and engaging people
- ☐ The focus is on creating spaces for real dialogue, shared learning and relationship building
- ☐ You may never use these techniques exactly as designed but you can borrow key lessons from any of them to help design your own effective meetings

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Fact Sheets (pages 20-31)

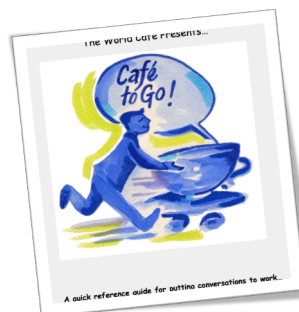
- ☐ Description
- ☐ Advantages
- ☐ Challenges
- ☐ Principles
- ☐ Resource needs
- ☐ Size and Cost
- ☐ Links and Resources



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World Café

- ☐ Focused question(s)
- ☐ Tables of 3-5 persons
- ☐ Optional table "host" keeps track of conversations
- ☐ Rotate tables every 10-15 minutes
- ☐ Create wrapup which allows for summary of what was heard



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World Café Etiquette

- ☐ Focus on what matters
- ☐ Contribute your thinking and experience
- ☐ Speak from the heart
- ☐ Listen to understand
- ☐ Link and connect ideas
- ☐ Listen together for deeper themes, insights and questions
- ☐ Play, doodle, have fun, draw pictures



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EXERCISE

WORLD CAFE

- Single question
- Capture all ideas on same jamboard
- 3 short rounds
- Organize results with card storming and nominal group technique




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How Can We Build a More Participatory Culture at EPA?



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KEY LESSONS: World Cafe

- Turn any size meeting into small conversations
- Multiple shorter conversations allows participants to interact with lots of people
- Everyone is talking all the time, not just one at a time
- Allows for a deeper conversation while building knowledge and relationships



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15 Minute Break



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Open Space

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Open Space

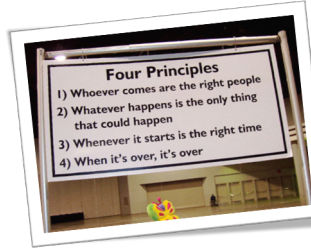
- No set agenda
- Agency provides space and logistics
- Requires many meeting spaces

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Open Space

- ❑ Participants ID topics, host discussions, and prepare summaries
- ❑ Participants go where they want
- ❑ Final summary of all sessions prepared



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KEY LESSONS: Open Space Meetings

- ❑ Sometimes it is important to let the participants decide what to talk about
- ❑ Let volunteers facilitate and record the results



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Study Circles

- ❑ Self-facilitated
- ❑ Agency provides training, process guides, and background materials
- ❑ May or may not have large final event



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Study Circles

- ❑ Voluntary groups of 8-15 people
- ❑ Unlimited number of groups
- ❑ Meet 3 -6 times over a period of weeks
- ❑ 2-3 hour moderated dialogues and input



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Meetings in a Box



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KEY LESSONS: Study Circles

- ❑ You don't host the meeting, or even attend to get results
- ❑ Expand your reach by having more, smaller events
- ❑ Builds community knowledge
- ❑ Builds community capacity to engage



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Samoan Circle



121

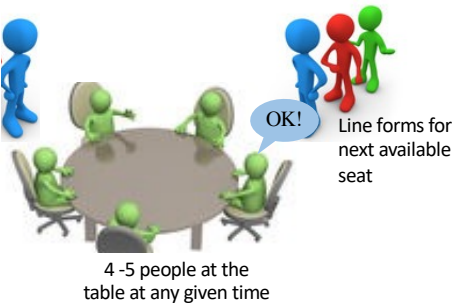
Samoan Circle

- ❑ Controversial or emotional topic
- ❑ Room set in the round with table for four at center with microphones
- ❑ Only people at the table can talk
- ❑ Anyone can join the conversation
- ❑ Establish groundrules
- ❑ Provide notetakers
- ❑ No direct facilitation

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Samoan Circle

Individuals can stand across from those they wish to debate



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Three Meeting Support Tools

- ❑ Focused Conversation
- ❑ Card Storming
- ❑ Nominal Group Technique

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The Focused Conversation



What have you seen, heard, and observed?

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The Focused Conversation

How do you feel about it, what has surprised or challenged you?



126

The Focused Conversation



What has
had meaning
for you?



127

The Focused Conversation

What are you
going to do with
what you have
learned?



128

The Focused Conversation

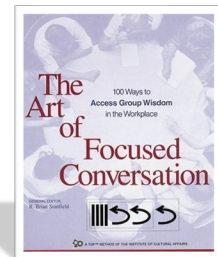
O		Objective	What happened?
R		Reflective	What did you feel?
I		Interpretive	What did it mean?
D		Decisional	What will you do now?



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Focused Conversation

- Mimics human response to a situation
- Prepares a series of questions to understand and react



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Card Storming

- Use cards to capture ideas one at a time
- Display on a table or wall
- Work as a group to identify themes and organize ideas
- Refine/combine ideas as needed



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Nominal Group Technique

Stages of NGT Group Meeting



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Nominal Group Technique

1. Generate ideas (brainstorm)
2. Record ideas (cardstorm)
3. Discuss ideas (dialogue)
4. Vote on ideas (dots!)



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Final Questions, Open Session



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Thank You, Please Remember the Evaluation



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